REMARKS

Filed concurrently herewith is a Request for a Two-Month Extension of Time which extends the shortened statutory period for response to August 22, 2005. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that this response is being timely filed.

The Official Action dated March 22, 2005 has been received and its contents carefully noted. In view thereof, the Abstract, Specification and Claims 1, 3, 4 and 16 have been amended in order to better define that which Applicants regards as the invention. As previously, claims 1-22 are presently pending in the instant application.

Initially, with reference to page 4 of the Office Action, claims 1, 2, 5-15 and 17-22 have been indicated as being allowable over the prior art of record while claims 3, 4 and 16 have been objected to as containing minor informalities but would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the objections set forth in the Official Action. In this regard, as can be seen from the foregoing amendments, claims 1, 3, 4 and 16 have been amended as suggested by the Examiner. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Applicants' claimed invention is now in proper formal condition for allowance.

With reference now to page 2 of the Office Action, the drawings have been objected to under 37 C.F.R. 1.38(a) in that the drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Specifically, the Examiner is of the position that the suspension set forth in claim 1 must be shown on the feature canceled from the claims.

In this regard, and with reference to the specification at page 17, lines 2-4, the front suspension cross member 15 is noted as being attached to the number 1 cross member 14 and the pair of front side frames 10 and the front suspension 17 is attached to the front suspension cross member 15. That is, the front suspension 17 is clearly illustrated in Fig. 1. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the suspension referred to in claim 1 is

illustrated as reference numeral 17 in Fig. 1. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the several figures show every feature of the invention specified in the claims and are in proper formal condition for allowance.

With reference now to paragraph 3 of the Office Action, the specification has been objected to as including minor informalities. Particularly, the Examiner states that in the Brief Description of the Drawings, the Figs. 3, 8, 9, 12, 14, 23, and 29 are set forth but do not correspond to the appropriate figures in the drawings. That is, the Examiner notes that no Fig. 3 is present but there is, however, Figs. 3A, 3B, and 3C. Likewise, there is no Fig. 8, but there are instead Figs. 8A and 8B. In this regard, the Examiner's attention is directed to Applicants' Preliminary Amendment filed January 14, 2004 wherein the Brief Description of the Drawings for each of Figs. 3, 8, 9, 12, 14, 23, 24 and 29 were amended in order to appropriately refer to the sub figures as noted by the Examiner. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Applicants' specification with respect to the Brief Description of the Drawings is in proper formal condition for allowance. For the Examiner's convenience, a copy of Applicants' Preliminary Amendment filed January 14, 2004 is attached hereto.

The specification has been reviewed with the informality noted by Examiner being corrected. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Applicants' specification is now in proper formal condition for allowance.

As to the objection to the Abstract, as can be seen from the foregoing amendments, a new abstract has been set forth as attached hereto wherein the phrase "is disclosed" has been deleted. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted the Abstract is now in proper formal condition for allowance.

With reference now to paragraph 6 of the Office Action, claims 3, 4 and 16 have been objected to as including minor informalities. As can be seen from the foregoing amendments, claims 1, 3, 4 and 16 have been amended as suggested by the Examiner. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Applicants' claimed invention is now in proper formal condition for allowance.

Therefore, in view of the foregoing it is respectfully requested that the objections be reconsidered and withdrawn by the Examiner, that claims 1-22 be allowed and that the application be passed to issue.

Should the Examiner believe a conference would be of benefit in expediting the prosecution of the instant application, he is hereby invited to telephone counsel to arrange such a conference.

Respectfully submitted,

Donald R. Studebaker
Reg. No. 32,815

Nixon Peabody LLP
401 9th Street N.W.
Suite 900
Washington, D. C. 20004
(202) 585-8000

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re New Patent Application of	)
Takanobu KAMURA et al.	)
Japanese Priority Application Nos. 2003-008581	)
and 2003-029513	) Attn: Applications
Japanese Priority Dates: 01/16/2003 & 02/06/2003	) Branch
For: FLOOR PANEL STRUCTURE OF	)
VEHICLE BODY	) Date: January 14, 2004

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450

Sir:

Please preliminarily amend the subject application as follows:

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend specification as follows:

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

In the accompanying drawings:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the underbody of a vehicle having the floor panel structure of a vehicle body according to a first embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 2 is a perspective view showing the floor panel structure of a vehicle body according to the first embodiment of the present invention;

FIGS. 3A, 3B and 3C are schematic sectional views ~~FIG. 3 is a schematic sectional view~~ of a floor panel with the vibration reducing structure, a plot of rigidity and a plot of the strain energy distribution according to the first embodiment;

FIG. 4 is an enlarged view showing the groove and damping material in the vibration transmission-reducing structure according to the first embodiment;

FIG. 5 is a schematic sectional view of a floor panel in which additional damping material is added to the floor panel of FIG. 3;

FIG. 6 is an enlarged view showing one example of the corner of the groove according to the first embodiment;

FIG. 7 is an enlarged view showing another example of the corner of the groove according to the first embodiment;

FIGS. 8A and 8B are perspective sectional views ~~FIG. 8 is a perspective sectional view~~ of experimental models used to describe the vibration blocking characteristics of the vibration reducing structure according to the first embodiment;

FIGS. 9A and 9B are plots ~~FIG. 9 is a plot~~ of the experimental results obtained from the experimental models of FIG. 8;

FIG. 10 is a plot of the experimental results obtained from the experimental models of FIG. 8;

FIG. 11 is a schematic view showing a strut suspension system;

FIGS. 12A and 12B are schematic views ~~FIG. 12 is a schematic view~~ showing the cancellation of sound emitted by the floor panel with a vibration mode adjusting structure according to the first embodiment;

FIG. 13 is a top view showing another example of the vibration mode adjusting structure according to the first embodiment;

FIGS. 14A, 14B, 14C, 14D, 14E, 14F, and 14G are sectional views ~~FIG. 14 is a sectional view~~ showing variations of the floor panel structure of a vehicle body according to the first embodiment;

FIG. 15 is a sectional view showing a further variation of the floor panel structure according to the first embodiment;

FIG. 16 is a partial sectional view showing a first variation of the groove which is the vibration reducing structure or vibration blocking area of the first embodiment;

FIG. 17 is a partial sectional view showing a second variation of the groove which is the vibration reducing structure or vibration blocking area of the first embodiment;

FIG. 18 is a partial sectional view showing a third variation of the groove which is the vibration reducing structure or vibration blocking area of the first embodiment;

FIG. 19 is a perspective view showing the floor panel structure of a vehicle body according to a second embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 20 is a partially enlarged view showing a first floor panel according to the second embodiment;

FIG. 21 is a sectional view showing the sectional structure of the floor panel in the vehicle crosswise direction along A-A of FIG. 19;

FIG. 22 is a sectional view showing the cross-sectional structure of the floor panel in the vehicle body lengthwise direction along B-B of FIG. 19;

FIGS. 23A, 23B, and 23C are schematic sectional views ~~FIG. 23 is a schematic sectional view~~ of a floor panel, a plot of rigidity and a plot of the strain energy distribution according to the second embodiment;

FIGS. 24A, 24B, and 24C are schematic sectional views ~~FIG. 24 is schematic sectional views~~ showing a conventional floor panel that is flat over its entire surface (FIG. 24A), a conventional floor panel that has damping material attached to the entire surface of its curved surfaces and planar areas (FIG. 24B), and a floor panel (FIG. 24C) according to the second embodiment, in order to describe the vibration-reducing characteristics of the second embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 25 is a plot showing the vibration-reducing characteristics according to the second embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 26 is a schematic sectional view of a floor panel having the floor panel of FIG. 23 to which additional noise-absorbing material is applied;

FIG. 27 is an partially enlarged view of the planar areas and damping material of the vibration reducing or blocking structure of the second embodiment;

FIG. 28 is a perspective view showing the floor panel structure of a vehicle body according to a third embodiment of the present invention;

FIGS. 29A and 29B are partially enlarged sectional views ~~FIG. 29 is a partially enlarged sectional view~~ of a floor panel used to describe a first method of installing damping material in the first embodiment;

FIG. 30 is a partially enlarged sectional view of a floor panel used to describe a second method of installing damping material in the first embodiment;

FIG. 31 is a partially enlarged sectional view of a floor panel used to describe a second method of installing damping material in the second and third embodiments; and

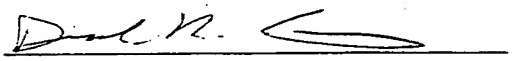
FIG. 32 is a partially enlarged sectional view of a floor panel used to describe a third method of installing damping material in the first embodiment.

REMARKS

The specification has been amended to correct the description of certain drawing figures in the Brief Description of the Drawings.

Examination on the merits is requested.

Respectfully submitted,



Donald R. Studebaker
Registration No. 32,815

NIXON PEABODY LLP
401 9th Street, N.W.
Suite 900
Washington, D.C. 20004-2128

(202) 585-8000